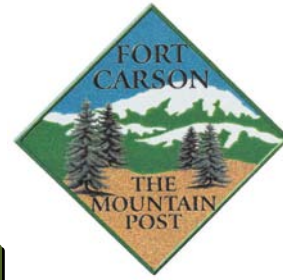




## 4th Infantry Division



### Media Release

4th Infantry Division

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## A bond forged from tragedy: Two friends in Afghanistan observe what they lost on 9/11

Story and photos by Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright  
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FARAH, Afghanistan – As U.S. service members bowed their heads for a moment of silence in observation of the 9/11 terrorists attacks in 2001, the only sound that could be heard on Forward Operating Base Farah on Sept. 11, 2010 were the engines of tactical vehicles in the distance preparing to go on patrol.

The sound is a reminder of the sacrifices service members continue to make in Afghanistan, nine years after the World Trade Center and Pentagon were attacked. Sept. 11th on FOB Farah marked an opportunity to reflect on the tragic events which sparked the on-going conflict in the region, but for friends Capt. Patrick Dowdell and former Capt. Joe Quinn, it was another day to remember the loss of a family member as a result of the attacks.

“For me and Joe, we remember 9/11 everyday. It is a part of who we are,” said Capt. Dowdell, who serves as chief of operations, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division out of Ft. Carson, Colo.

Dowdell's father, Kevin Dowdell, a 21-year fire fighter for the Fire Department of New York, was killed while conducting rescue efforts with Rescue 4 from Queens, N.Y. inside the south tower of the World Trade Center.

Dowdell and Quinn's friendship started at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. Quinn was already attending the academy, Dowdell continued his military service in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, enrolling at West Point one year after his father was killed. Both grew up in the same neighborhood in Brooklyn, N.Y. and both lost a family member during 9/11; a bond was instantly forged.

Quinn's brother, Jimmy Quinn, an employee of Cantor Fitzgerald, worked on the 101st floor of the north tower when it was struck by a commercial airliner between the 93rd and 99th floors. Cantor Fitzgerald lost 648 employees on 9/11, the highest toll for any company during the attacks.

Dowdell and Quinn's friendship continued while they were both assigned to Ft. Sill, Okla., where then-2nd Lt. Dowdell and then-Capt. Quinn roomed together in 2006.

Quinn completed two combat tours and Dowdell completed one in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The journey of the two came full circle nine years to the day after Sept. 11, 2001 in Afghanistan, the country which harboured Al-Qaeda terrorists who orchestrated the attacks. Dowdell contacted Quinn, who, following six years of active duty service with the U.S. Army, is currently serving as a civilian on a Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team in Herat. They discussed the completion of a 9/11 memorial and the plans for a remembrance ceremony at FOB Farah on Sept. 11.

The memorial contained a steel piece of the WTC, a plywood replica of the twin towers, and photographic displays of the attacks. It was constructed in front of the 4/42<sup>nd</sup>

Field Artillery Regiment headquarters, right on the doorstep where Dowdell plans daily operations in Farah Province.

Quinn travelled to Farah to join his brother-in-arms during the observation of the day, to be in the company of a friend who understands his grief.

“If we can’t be with our families, we might as well be together. It really helps seeing Pat on this day,” said Quinn, “For me, serving in Afghanistan on Sept. 11 is very significant. This is where Al-Qaeda trained terrorists under the protection of the Taliban.”

Dowdell and Quinn said one of the most important aspects of today is to honor the service members who have heroically volunteered to combat terrorism worldwide.

“Today is not just about the lives which were lost on 9/11, it is also about the troops serving as a result of 9/11,” said Dowdell.

The steel chunk of the WTC that stands on the grounds of FOB Farah represents what was lost on 9/11. Dowdell, who also helped orchestrate a 9/11 memorial at Ft. Carson, worked extensively with countless organizations and agencies back in the U.S. to retrieve the piece.

Cooperation with Don Addy, President of the National Homeland Defense Foundation in Colorado Springs, Colo., and Lee Ielpi of the WTC Tribute Center whose son was killed on 9/11 while serving as a FDNY fire fighter, was essential to successfully acquire the steel piece of the WTC. Release arrangements were made final with Peter Miller of the New York Port Authority, where remains of the WTC are stored in a hangar at John K. Kennedy Airport, N.Y.

“The steel piece is a daily reminder for troops before they go out on patrol of what occurred 9 years ago. The sacrifices they give everyday honors our families,” said Dowdell.

For the family members of Dowdell and Quinn back in New York, the loss of their loved ones is not forgotten. Dowdell's younger brother, James Dowdell, is a fire fighter for Ladder 174 in Brooklyn, where he will be participating in the Tour of Duty Run across the Brooklyn Bridge during the morning hours of Sept. 11.

Dowdell and Quinn explained the humbling relationship between the FDNY, NYPD and U.S. service members as a result of 9/11. The fire fighters and police officers of New York claim those serving in the military are heroes that they idolize, but service members would argue the opposite, that those serving on the streets of New York are the true heroes.

The two friends say both are heroes. They both serve to protect the lives of Americans and freedoms of people worldwide and their sacrifices honor the lives of Kevin Dowdell, Jimmy Quinn, and thousands of others that were lost on Sept. 11, 2001.

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Joe Quinn, Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team, left, and Army Capt. Patrick Dowdell of Ft. Carson, Colo., chief of operations, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, right, stand at the 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base Farah, Afghanistan, Sept. 11, 2010. The two men, who both grew up in the same neighborhood in Brooklyn, N.Y., forged a bond while attending the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. and as roommates at Ft. Sill, Okla. Dowdell's father, Kevin Dowdell, was killed while conducting rescue operations with the Fire Department of New York in the south tower of the World Trade Center and Quinn's brother was killed while working for Cantor Fitzgerald on the 101<sup>st</sup> floor of the north tower during the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

(ISAF photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright)



Joe Quinn, Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team, left, and Capt. Patrick Dowdell of Ft. Carson, Colo., chief of operations, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, right, raise a Fire Department of New York flag following the conclusion of a 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base Farah, Sept. 11, 2010. The two men, who both grew up in the same neighborhood in Brooklyn, N.Y., forged a bond while attending the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. and as roommates at Ft. Sill, Okla. Dowdell's father Kevin Dowdell was killed while conducting rescue operations with FDNY in the south tower of the World Trade Center and Quinn's brother was killed while working for Cantor Fitzgerald on the 101<sup>st</sup> floor of the north tower during the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Dowdell and Quinn participated in a memorial ceremony with other service members on FOB Farah to mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

(ISAF photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright)



U.S. service members participate in a moment of silence at the 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base Farah, Afghanistan, Sept. 11, 2010. The event was conducted to mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

(ISAF photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright)



A U.S. service member walks by a steel piece of the World Trade Center following a 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base Farah, Afghanistan, Sept. 11, 2010. The event was conducted to mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The steel piece was transported to FOB Farah by coordination of Capt. Patrick Dowdell of Ft. Carson, Colo., chief of operations, 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and other agencies and organizations from the U.S. Dowdell's father Kevin Dowdell was killed while conducting rescue operations with FDNY in the south tower of the WTC. Dowdell currently serves on FOB Farah.  
(ISAF photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright)





U.S. service members walk by the 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base (FOB) Farah, Afghanistan during the early hours of Sept. 11, 2010. An event to mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks was conducted later that morning.

(ISAF photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Rylan K. Albright)



The U.S. and Fire Department of New York flag light up the 9/11 memorial on Forward Operating Base (FOB) Farah, Afghanistan during the early hours of Sept. 11, 2010. An event to mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks was conducted later that morning.

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